

SPRIT OF THE PRESS.

Editorial Opinions of the Leading Journals upon Current Topics—Compiled Every Day for the Evening Telegraph.

THE NEUTRAL POWERS.

The attitude of the great European powers, with regard to the French-German war, has from the beginning been canvassed with intense interest. During the progress of the war this interest was somewhat lulled by the brilliancy of the German victories, but now it revives with the prospect of a speedy peace. As each of the belligerent powers is very cautious to publish, concerning this point, only such facts and rumors as are favorable to its own side, the cable despatches are naturally more adapted to misguide than to enlighten public opinion. We know, however, enough of the disposition of the great neutral powers to ascertain, with a high degree of probability, what course they are likely to pursue. It may be regarded as self-evident that the great powers will not strengthen friendly feelings between Prussia and the Governments of the other European powers. Among the peoples the idea of a settlement of all international feuds, on the basis of a mutual recognition of the nationality principle, may gain ground. The sovereigns are still guided by considerations based on the old views of a balance of power in Europe. No Government would probably have seen with satisfaction the extension of France to the Rhine, though the silence and even the alliance of the other powers with regard to the balance of power in Europe, to secure their joint interposition or even intervention, in case Germany should insist on the restoration of Alsace and Lorraine, or impose other conditions too revolting to the still unbroken pride of the nation. The special missions of Prince Napoleon to Florence, and Prince Murat to London, have undoubtedly been caused by these views. Of the results of these missions we are but imperfectly informed. A significant declaration is, however, published by the official organ of the Russian Government, which denies that its Government has committed itself to a protest against the dismemberment of France, though it admits that it would not favorably regard any schemes of that kind. The Emperor Alexander is known as a decided partisan of a lasting alliance with Prussia; but he finds it nevertheless necessary to express in advance a dissatisfaction with the growth of Germany at the expense of France. The German provinces of Russia on the Baltic, in which the feeling of the German nationality has of late begun to assert itself in a very marked manner, are a constant reminder to the Slav against the German nation, and a check to any alliance into which the personal feeling of the present Emperor might lead him to enter. The heir to the throne is reported to be a violent Slavist, who, with his party, is fully convinced that a great war is inevitable between the Germanic and Slavonic nations for the purpose of consolidating the whole Slav race into one empire under the rule of Russia; and his party, the Slavists, are parading in their principal organs the most violent opposition against Prussia. Fortunately for the Germans the enthusiasm of the Slav for the Poles for the French strongly counteracts this movement, for the Poles still hope for a restoration of their empire, and would probably not hesitate to wheel around into an alliance with Prussia, in case it afforded a better prospect for the fulfillment of their patriotic yearnings.

The Government of Italy does not conceal its wish to be a faithful vassal of France in case the latter power is willing to withdraw her opposition to its annexation of Rome; but the feeling among the educated and liberal classes is so strongly in favor of Germany, that a constant continental war on account of a frontier question. The intentions of the court of Austria appear to be very warlike. The heads of the army are burning with the desire to take revenge on Prussia for the year 1866. But they have found this to be impossible, in view of the threatening attitude of the German population, which demands either absolute neutrality or an alliance against the hereditary foe of the German nation. Only a few organs of the ultra-montane party and the aristocracy seemed to waver; but now even these have joined the general opinion, and express a hope that the enemy of Germany may be thoroughly punished. A war of Austria against Germany would be suicidal. So strong, indeed, is the current of public opinion among the Germans of Austria that they may be expected to demand soon a long and organic union with the remainder of Germany.

We regard it, therefore, as improbable that any of the four great neutral powers will be induced to take hostile steps against Germany. We may have a conference which will cast its combined influence into the scale of France; but we believe that none will be willing to go beyond it; and if France wants an advantageous peace she will have to conquer it herself alone.

THE TAX-PAYERS AND THE REPUBLICAN PARTY.

From the N. Y. Times. Democratic journals pay a poor compliment to the intelligence of the country when they deny or depreciate the economic excellence of the administration, and the extent to which the Republican party has afforded relief to the tax-payers. Facts constitute a record which the most ingenious Democrat cannot shake. Whatever its faults, the administration has done its duty in the collection of revenue and the abatement of appropriations. Every branch of the fiscal service has exhibited a marked increase. A certain degree of growth we look for as the result of national recuperation from the embarrassment produced by

war; but this process cannot account for the improvement of the revenue which immediately followed the retirement of Andrew Johnson, and has continued since. The sudden and continuous gain to the Treasury has been due to the greater efficiency of the revenue service under President Grant—the great energy imparted to it, and the fidelity with which its working has been watched. More than forty millions of increase in the fiscal year 1867-70, as compared with the receipts of the previous year, is a fact that attests the honesty with which a great duty has been performed.

And there has been honesty in the application of the large surplus which taxation and thrift placed at the disposal of the administration. The expenditures have been kept below the appropriations. Forty millions tell the tale of the first year of Grant's economy in comparison with the outlay which prevailed in the last year of Johnson; and for the current year the saving has been nearly doubled. That is the rate at which the work of retrenchment proceeds. What the full measure of the country's gain has been, a reduction of the debt to an amount exceeding one hundred and sixty millions, since the commencement of the administration, sufficiently proves. A large surplus has been realized, and this has been the manner of its application.

The fact, too, are all the time being cut down. The reduction effected during the recent session amounts to eighty millions or more, three-fourths of which takes effect in the present fiscal year. The Democrats assail the reform as exceptional, as something not known before, and not likely to be heard of again after the elections. The truth is, however, that the Republican majority in Congress have year after year lightened the people's burdens. They began soon after the restoration of peace, and have steadily continued the work. Contracting the taxation they have been wiser than the recent changes made into force, with the taxation as it was when the war ended, we have as the product of Republican effort a total reduction of not less than two hundred and fifty millions. The reduction of eighty millions or more, which has just been effected, is, then, only a well-established feature of the Republican policy. And so the party should proclaim it.

All the signs point to another large surplus in the current year. Several of the taxes which are soon to cease are yet in force, and will swell the amount in the Treasury. The general productivity of the revenue will leave a handsome margin. The monthly operations of the Secretary in the bond market indicate the possession of large means in excess of the wants of the Government. The party is, therefore, brought to this issue—shall even the reduced rate of taxation be imposed if it yield a surplus of ninety or a hundred millions, or shall a further reduction take place to the extent of fifty or seventy millions? We know Mr. Boutwell's views and the views of the tax-payers, and we know that there is a gulf between them. The party must side with one or the other. To be consistent, to justify its professions, and to satisfy the people, it must decide against the Secretary and in favor of the continued diminution of taxes.

The attempt of the Democrats to show that the relief already afforded benefits some States and some classes more than others, is simply puerile. To make any just comparison of class interests as affected by reform, the five years' work of the Republicans in Congress should be taken into consideration. Two hundred and fifty millions cannot be lifted off the people's shoulders without benefiting the whole country. We may not approve of every detail of the changes made this year, but in regard even to them it is evident that eighty millions reduction is a reform whose benefits will not be confined to any section or any class. The West and South will share with the East the profits of the policy with which the Republican party has been for five years identified.

SYMPATHY IN THE PAST AND PRESENT.

From the N. Y. World. One minor good result from the deplorable conflict by which Western Europe is agonized, is that it has stimulated our radical friends to a minute study of history, especially our own. The record of the "Revolution," once so sacred and so familiar, had become blurred and monotonous, or a sort of palimpsest on which recent rubbish has been stamped, and no one cared about it unless when Bancroft tried to disturb and pollute the calm and once transcendent spring. When, however, France and Germany grappled each other in deadly strife, and politicians sought to stir up unrequited sympathy, so as to make out of it party capital, some old-fashioned students of the past bethought them of ancient memories, and ventured to refer to days when France and Frenchmen were our friends, and Germany, its rulers and its people, very much the reverse. It was, perhaps, an obsolete thought, a piece of antique sentimentalism, to think or talk of historical sympathies or antipathies. "The times that tried men's souls" were no great things after all. The brave days of old were nothing—nothing—such as in the District of Columbia, when Stonewall Jackson was supposed to be coming down the valley, a Pope was galloping back to Centerville. What were Washington's anxieties at Valley Forge, or West Point, when told of Arnold's treason, to Lincoln's after Fredericksburg, when our florid friend General Cochrane rushed into his council chamber and told him Burnside could not be trusted? It was a petty, poor business, this of the old Revolution.

Still, state as it was, it would never do for our radical friends to give up the past without a struggle, or to admit our infant country owed gratitude to none but Frenchmen. It has been pretty hard work—so hard that we feel disposed to give our assistance to so desperate a search. The French partisan has relatively little trouble. From the day when Beaumarchais began to write till the kind words and brave deeds of French sympathizers glisten in every line of our story; and his merit is a cold heart indeed who reads without emotion Washington's order of the day, in 1778—the darkest hour before his dawn, in which he bids his ragged, starving soldiers "thank the Almighty Ruler of the universe for raising up among the princes and people of the earth a powerful friend to aid them." The French roll of honor in America is a rich and full one. Desires as we are, if not to aid, at least not to embarrass our friends in their search for Teutonic auxiliaries, we pass by all references to the aggregation of Hessians and Brunswickers arrayed against us, and look for actual friends. We find Poles, like Paliski and Kocelusko, and Polish Russians, such as the strange creature, Bieniowski, whose claims on Washington, so says his letter, rested on the fact that "he had served against the King of Prussia;" but of Germans or Prussians not one claiming to be such, and but three of any sort. De Kalb, who came at the behest of Choiseul; and Steuben, whom his master would not allow to come, but who,

gradually rise to their true value under any events that may occur in Europe. If we have been able to accomplish so much in raising money for a gigantic war and in rapidly paying off the debt in the past, what can we not do in the near future when our population will be doubled and the wealth of the country quadrupled?

THE PROSPECT OF GERMAN UNITY.

From the Pall Mall Gazette. For Germany there is now only one question—that of unity. The unity of Germany—the dream of her wisest, the longing of her most devoted sons, the object of her earnest and disinterested prayers as ever were poured forth for any purpose of this world—is now at hand. It is more than at hand—it is at the door. Difficulties, intrigues, jealousies, have vanished like dreams of the night before the resolution of a people stirred up, happily for itself, by foreign aggression. The great step forward has been taken; and that step cannot be retraced. French victory might retard the mechanical operation of the change, by imposing terms of peace incompatible with political union, but it could not destroy the national union once effected, and the national union, after some further period of probation, must bring about the political. To those who cherish aspirations like these, controversies about the relative morality of Napoleon and Bismarck, or the meaning of the treaty of Prague, or declarations about Prussian ambition, are really altogether out of place. They are beside the point. The great question is whether the mighty flood which is now setting in one direction with concentrated and irresistible energy. We may call this the language of enthusiasts, if we please. But enthusiasts such as these have shaped the course of European events more than once; in 1789, and again in 1814; and it has been no great misfortune of statesmen—especially, perhaps, of English statesmen—that they could rarely comprehend the force of popular enthusiasm, or the control of public affairs by any stronger springs than those of dynastic intrigues or calculations of expediency.

It is not so with the French. They are divining the tendencies of things, partly from phlegmatic habits and partly from unreasoning to enter fully into the mind of foreign nations, the judgment of French observers is far more distorted by their own antipathies and prejudices. The spirit of German unity is a thing they cannot understand, because they are determined not to understand it. And the consequence is that their best political writing on the great European question of the day seems antiquated as soon as it is published. They are months, or years, behind the clock. Mr. Victor Cherbuliez, a "publicist" of repute, has published a series of able articles on "La Prusse et l'Allemagne" in the Revue des Deux Mondes; and this is a point of knowledge at which M. Cherbuliez has arrived (with all a Frenchman's certitude) no longer ago than last April.

"Europe may be reassured by the fact that the interests of Germany are in accordance with the interests of France, in a kind of *collaboration*, had consented to surrender themselves to her, without conditions, it was all over with Germany. And, supposing that a majority in Prussia and Bavaria had gone so far as to solicit the accession of these states to the Confederation of the North, the opposing minority would still be so numerous as to render the Confederation of the North, and the South, would have to hold for half a century under the dominion of the said—a sad result for Germany, for Europe, and for Prussia herself."

World, he rushed to a newspaper office and published "a card." Since that all has been at sea—our English diplomacy has been in commission, Moran, Badeau, at London, and, it may be, Dudley, at Liverpool, administering it, and the incongruous names of Trumbull, Greeley, and Sherman floating around. Many are called, but no one is taken. Now, it occurs to us that if at this juncture Mr. or as gossip (we hope truly, for he deserves all honor) says, Sir Edward Thornton were to present himself at the Department and say—Mr. Secretary, her Majesty's government, out of respect to you, has always maintained a full mission at Washington, occasionally on emergency varying it by a baron and an earl. We have, therefore, a right to look for similar courtesy from you, and I beg to notify you that we cannot any longer put up with a charge or a consul. If this, or anything like this, put into diplomatic phrase, were to be said to Mr. Fish, his placid face would be sorely tried, and his kindly face would wear a look of greater perplexity than ever. An act of this kind, we respectfully suggest to the President to advise, and if we may presume, we venture to suggest a form like the following:—

THE STRONG FINANCIAL POSITION OF THE UNITED STATES.

From the N. Y. Herald. While the governments of the great European nations can hardly make both ends meet, even in time of peace, this country has an overflowing treasury, and is paying the national debt off at the rate of over a hundred millions of dollars a year. The stupendous sum raised and expended during the four years of our war was unparalleled in the history of the world, and all without a foreign loan or aid from foreign capitalists. There are several lessons to be learned from this. Besides, the general extravagance and plunder of the treasury were frightful, and would have bankrupted any other nation. No country in the world could raise such sums as we did. Yet five years after the war not only has all the vast floating debt been discharged but we have paid off several hundred millions of the organized debt. At the present rate of liquidation we could extinguish the whole, which is a little more than two thousand millions, within fifty years.

It is not surprising, therefore, that our credit remains good during the terrible conflict of arms that is convulsing Europe. At first, of course, United States securities fell the shock, as all others did, from that natural sympathy which the finances of one great civilized country have with those of other countries. But afterwards, when people and capitalists began to reason more clearly the resources of the United States and the superior value and security of our bonds, they clung to them as the best investment they could have. Hence there have been few of our bonds sent home from Europe. Nor is it likely there would be any serious depreciation if even the war should spread over Europe. Our superior and well-paying securities would be held and sought for by the people no matter what strain there might be upon the Government and capitalists for money. There is no reason, indeed, why our bonds should not

gradually rise to their true value under any events that may occur in Europe. If we have been able to accomplish so much in raising money for a gigantic war and in rapidly paying off the debt in the past, what can we not do in the near future when our population will be doubled and the wealth of the country quadrupled?

THE MOTLEY VAGANCY.

From the N. Y. World. The Evening Post, true to its instincts, social and literary, continues to mourn over Mr. Motley's recall, and says:—"As a good many contradictory stories have been told in the press about the manner of Mr. Motley's removal, it may be useful to state the facts, which we get from the best sources, that Mr. Motley was asked to resign in a letter from the State Department, which letter was published in the *World*. This letter he received only a day before the telegraph reported that Mr. Frothingham's name had been sent to the Senate. Mr. Motley telegraphed that his resignation under such circumstances would be equivalent to a dismissal, and declined to accept it. Mr. Motley had always, he maintains, obeyed instructions without any qualification whatever. This is probably true, and a more awkward, ungentlemanlike way of doing the right thing could not have well been devised. The whole thing is simple, perverse, *gaucherie*. Two months ago the President, in a fit of ill-humor and solely because he had quarrelled with somebody else dismissed Motley and nominated Mr. Frothingham. That gentleman faintly declines by telegram first, and then positively by word of mouth. The President, for his own personal comfort and that he may have a good time of it, asks that he may be kept a secret, and Mr. Frothingham very weakly acquiesces in the masquerade. "All the world wondered," as at Balaklava, and, as at Balaklava, "some one had blundered." The clientele of Essex county and of a larger circuit did not know what to expect. At last, unable to reconcile his attitude to a gentlemanly instinct and guided by the *World*, he rushed to a newspaper office and published "a card." Since that all has been at sea—our English diplomacy has been in commission, Moran, Badeau, at London, and, it may be, Dudley, at Liverpool, administering it, and the incongruous names of Trumbull, Greeley, and Sherman floating around. Many are called, but no one is taken. Now, it occurs to us that if at this juncture Mr. or as gossip (we hope truly, for he deserves all honor) says, Sir Edward Thornton were to present himself at the Department and say—Mr. Secretary, her Majesty's government, out of respect to you, has always maintained a full mission at Washington, occasionally on emergency varying it by a baron and an earl. We have, therefore, a right to look for similar courtesy from you, and I beg to notify you that we cannot any longer put up with a charge or a consul. If this, or anything like this, put into diplomatic phrase, were to be said to Mr. Fish, his placid face would be sorely tried, and his kindly face would wear a look of greater perplexity than ever. An act of this kind, we respectfully suggest to the President to advise, and if we may presume, we venture to suggest a form like the following:—

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able because foreign powers would not allow it; because Italian local jealousies would forever prevent it; because the geographical obstacles to such unity were insuperable. The first Napoleon, whose penetrating mind perceived the fallacy of the first two reasons, yielded to the force of the third. In a very remarkable chapter of his *Remains* he explains why Italy, from her configuration and position, cannot become one. But it was not given even to his sagacity to foresee the operation of steam and the telegraph. As soon as the time arrived, the apparently hopeless problem was solved at once. One man of genius set himself to accomplish it by force of statesmanship. Two or three dreamers of dreams, anathematized by the ruling classes of society, prepared the way for him by sowing the seed of Italian patriotism far and wide on soil hitherto occupied by the rank growth of provincial passions and intrigues. And the work was achieved, and an Italy created, almost before old-fashioned diplomacy had had time to turn round in its bed and prepare to greet the new phenomenon in official costume. One more chapter in history remains to be completed. German nationality has to be added to English, French, Spanish, Italian. The map of Western Europe will then be filled up. Whether the union, first announced by German cannon at Weissenburg, is to be proclaimed by the same stern heralds at Paris, or whether its formal accomplishment is again to be delayed by defeat, the event, immediate or not, is on all human calculation certain. And it is equally certain that, whenever it takes place, it will be almost as great a blessing to Europe in general, and to jealous France herself, as to the future Germany.

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